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SENATE

{ REPORT
No. 671

SISTER M. LEONIDA

AUGUST 20 (legislative day, AUGUST 1), 1951.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. McCARRAN, from the Committee on the Judiciary, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 2160]

The Committee on the Judiciary, to which was referred the bill (H. R. 2160) for the relief of Sister M. Leonida, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of the bill is to grant the status of permanent residence in the United States to Sister M. Leonida. The bill provides for an appropriate quota deduction and for the payment of the required visa fee and head tax.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The beneficiary of the bill is a 29-year-old native and citizen of Bulgaria, who last entered the United States as a visitor on June 27, 1948. She is a nun attached to the Third Order of St. Francis and is presently in charge of the girls' dining room at Ladycliffe College, Highland Falls, N. Y.

The pertinent facts in the case are contained in the following letter dated October 24, 1950, to the chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives from the Deputy Attorney General with reference to H. R. 7726, which was a bill introduced in the Eighty-first Congress for the relief of the same alien.

OCTOBER 24, 1950.

Hon. EMANUEL CELLER,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This is in response to your request for the views of the Department of Justice concerning the bill (H. R. 7726) for the relief of Sisters M. Crocefissa, M. Reginalda, and M. Leonida.

The bill would provide that Sister M. Crocefissa (Maria Pozzobon), Sister M. Reginalda (Giovannina Gemin), and Sister M. Leonida (Zanka Gotcheva) shall be considered to have been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence as of the dates of their last entries, on payment of the required visa fees and head taxes.

The files of the Immigration and Naturalization Service of this Department disclose that the aliens, at the time of their entry into the United States, were destined for Mount St. Francis Convent, Peekskill, N. Y. They are missionary sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis of Rome, Italy. It appears that they joined the order in Rome with the understanding that they would receive foreign assignments. The orders directing them to travel to the United States were issued by the mother superior in Rome, Italy. The aliens were admitted into the United States at the port of New York under section 3 (2) of the Immigration Act of 1924 as temporary visitors.

The files disclose the following additional information with respect to the individual aliens.

Maria Pozzobon (Sister Crocefissa) is a native and citizen of Italy, having been born in Cavasagra, Italy, on February 7, 1923. She last entered the United States on January 9, 1948, and was admitted until April 25, 1948. Several extensions of her temporary stay were granted, the last one until May 15, 1950. She attended school in her native town until about 1934. She then lived and worked on the farm of her parents in Italy. In 1945 she joined the Third Order of St. Francis in Rome, Italy, as a missionary worker. Her mother, four brothers, and five sisters reside in Italy. Her only close relative in the United States is an uncle in Antioch, Calif. Her duties at the Peekskill convent are those of practical nurse in the sisters' infirmary.

Giovannina Gemin (Sister M. Reginalda) is a native and citizen of Italy, having been born in Ospedaletto, Italy, on February 2, 1928. She last entered the United States on January 9, 1948, and was admitted until April 25, 1948. She was granted several extensions of stay, the last one until May 15, 1950. The alien testified that she attended school until about the year 1938. From 1938 until July 1945, when she joined the Third Order of St. Francis in Rome, Italy, as a missionary sister, she resided and worked in her parents' home. Her parents, three brothers, and two sisters reside in Italy. She has no close relatives in the United States. Her duties at the Mount St. Francis Convent are those of a kitchen helper.

Zanka Gotcheva-Badeva (Sister Leonida) is a native and citizen of Bulgaria, having been born in Miromir, Bulgaria, on September 21, 1921. She last entered the United States on June 27, 1948, and was admitted until December 27, 1948. She was granted several extensions of stay, the last one until June 26, 1950. She stated that her full name is Zanka Gotcheva-Badeva, and that she attended St. Joseph's Parochial School in Miromir, Bulgaria, until 1933. From 1933 until 1937 she was enrolled in the St. Joseph's School in Constantinople, Turkey. She joined the Third Order of St. Francis on September 24, 1937. She has no relatives in this country. Her parents died in Bulgaria, and her only living relative is an uncle, Father Ignitus Badeva, a priest of the Roman Catholic Church, who resides in Bulgaria. She was at the Mount St. Francis Convent from the time of her admission in June 1948, until September 1948. Since the latter date, she has been a housekeeper in charge of the girls' dining room at the Ladycliffe College, Highland Falls, N. Y.

The quotas for Italy and Bulgaria to which the aliens are chargeable, are over-subscribed and immigration visas are not readily obtainable. It appears that there are insufficient young women enrolling, in the United States, as sisters, who are willing to carry on domestic duties such as are performed by these aliens. It is averred that such women are actually being sought by the order in the United States so that the situation in this country might be alleviated. Whether in this case the general provisions of the immigration laws should be waived presents a question of legislative policy concerning which this Department prefers not to make any recommendations.

If the measure should receive favorable consideration by the committee, it is suggested that it be amended by showing the full name of the alien, "Zanka Gotcheva-Badeva" in parenthesis at the beginning of line 6, and by adding the following section:

"Sec. 2. Upon the enactment of this bill, the Secretary of State is authorized and directed to instruct the proper quota-control officer to deduct two numbers from the nonpreference category of the quota for Italy and one number from the nonpreference category of the quota of Bulgaria for the first year such quotas are available."

Yours sincerely,

PEYTON FORD, *Deputy Attorney General.*

Sister M. Crocefissa and Sister M. Reginalda, who are referred to in the above-quoted report are the beneficiaries of H. R. 2158 of this Congress.

Congressman William A. Barrett, the author of the bill, submitted to the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives the following letter to the effect that the beneficiary of the bill is not eligible for administrative relief under the provisions of section 4 of the Displaced Persons Act, as amended:

PHILADELPHIA, PA., November 29, 1950.

Hon. WILLIAM A. BARRETT,
405 Old House Office Building, Washington, D. C.

DEAR BILL: Thanks for your communication and enclosures regarding Sisters Crocefissa, Reginalda, and Leonida.

I must respectfully disagree with Congressman Celler regarding the eligibility of Sister Leonida for adjustment under the Displaced Persons Act. Although Sister Leonida is a Bulgarian, and actually displaced from the country of her birth, she can return to the country of her last residence (Italy); hence, she is not a displaced person within the meaning of section 4 (b).

Under the circumstances, it would seem that legislation might be introduced in the Eighty-second Congress on behalf of all three nuns, if the present bills are not favorably disposed of during this session.

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

FILINDO B. MASINO.

Mother M. Bernice, provincial superior of the Missionary Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, urged the enactment of this bill and stressed the fact that Sister Leonida's services in this country are urgently needed.

The committee, after consideration of all the facts in the case, is of the opinion that the bill (H. R. 2160) should be enacted.

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